

COMMON COLD

Arizona Department of Corrections
Health Service Bureau

Inmate Wellness Program
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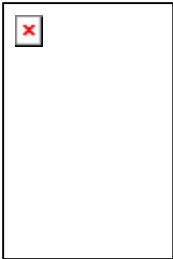
What is the common cold?

The common cold is an infection of the head and chest, caused by a virus. It can affect your nose, throat, sinuses, ears, and voice box. It is the most frequent illness occurring in humans.

How does it occur?

Colds are not caused by cold weather or fatigue. The virus is transmitted from person to person by *direct* physical contact (or by touching your face after direct contact), or by *indirect* contact (such as sharing food, drinks, cigarettes, or utensils). Also, infected droplets are placed in the air by sneezing and coughing, and can be breathed in.

What are the signs of a cold?



It starts with a sore throat, some weakness, congestion, and scratchy eyes. Sneezing, runny nose, headache, chills, and a mild fever may follow. These symptoms may last up to 10

days. It is normally not necessary to stop working.

How should I treat a cold?

- **Stop smoking while ill.**
- **Drink plenty of fluids.**

You can usually take care of yourself without needing to see your nurse or doctor. For a runny nose take antihistamines; for sore throat

use cough drops or gargle with warm salt water; for coughing and congestion take a cough syrup; for headaches, fever and aching take aspirin, generic Tylenol or ibuprofen. All of these items are available in the inmate store. **Do not take antibiotics for a cold.** Do not take more than the recommended doses of these medications. More is not better, and harmful effects may occur.

NOTE: You should submit an H.N.R. if:

- 1) You experience high fever not relieved by aspirin, Tylenol or ibuprofen.
- 2) You have a persistent severe sore throat or your throat has white or grey spots.
- 3) You have difficulty breathing or chest pain.
- 4) You have a temperature of 101 or higher that lasts more than two days.

How can I prevent catching a cold?



Do not share food, drinks, cigarettes, or drinking/eating utensils. Keep hands away from your face. Avoid close contact with others who are infected. To avoid passing the virus to

others: Cover your mouth and nose (preferably with a tissue) when you cough or sneeze, then wash your hands. Do not spit on the ground -- spit into a tissue or paper towel and throw it away, then wash your hands.